

# VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, January 15, 2026

## MINUTES

**VLCT Board Members Present (in person):** Charlie Hancock, Karen Godnick Barber, Mayor Doenges, Julie Hance, Ann Lawless, Brian Shupe.

**VLCT Board Members Present (via Zoom):** Mary Ann Goulette, Jessie Baker, Tracy Borst, Mike Hogan, Tom Leitz, Mayor Mulvaney-Stanak.

**VLCT Staff Present (in person):** Ted Brady, Seth Abbene, Abby Friedman, Phil Lavis, Josh Hanford, and Jeremy Weiss.

**VLCT Staff Present (via Zoom):** Jessi Hill, Katie Buckley, Emmanuel Anjamma.

**Guests Present (via Zoom):** Brittney Avila, Attorney, Haynes Benefits Principal, Gary Kupfever, attorney.

### **Agenda Item #1: Call to order by the President**

President Mary Ann Goulette called the meeting to order at 12:21 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #2: Additions and Deletions to the Agenda**

In order to accommodate guest arrivals, Charlie Hancock moved to reorder the agenda to consider Agenda Item #5, VLCT Interlocal Plan Application and Agenda Item #7, Executive Session to Discuss VLCT / VLCT PACIF / VERB Administrative Agreements and Addendum, prior to the Legislative Update. Ann Lawless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Agenda Item #3: Consent Agenda**

Mike Hogan moved to approve the consent agenda, including the meeting minutes of December 18, 2025, accept the January Personnel Report, and approve the Updated Inclement Weather Policy, Updated Personnel Policies, and the 2025 JohnsonLambert Audit Engagement Letter. Charlie Hancock seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Agenda Item #4: Organizational Update**

Ted provided updates on the Governing All with Skill curriculum, the launch of Muni-Pal, Equity Committee, training fees for 2026, manager recruitment, and highlighted some recent and upcoming trainings.

### **Agenda Item #5: VLCT Interlocal Plan Application**

Ted explained that VLCT had engaged Gallagher, a healthcare brokerage firm, to research potential health insurance options for the membership and was subsequently referred to Haynes Benefits, which specializes in interlocal insurance agreements. Brittney Avila, attorney with Haynes Benefits, joined the meeting and provided an overview of her experience in forming and maintaining association health plans, highlighting the long-term benefits of aggregating members to achieve more affordable coverage. A round of introductions followed.

Ted outlined the rationale for applying to the Department of Financial Regulation (DFR) to offer an interlocal health plan, noting that while cost savings are not guaranteed, aggregation of members and healthier pools could potentially reduce premiums over time. He explained that because VLCT is an unincorporated nonprofit, incorporation would be required to serve as the applicant, which could involve filing articles of incorporation, amending bylaws, or creating a new organization to merge with VLCT. Ted estimated the process could take three to six months with

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costs between \$5,000 and \$15,000, potentially funded from VERB resources allocated to this project in the 2025 budget, and referenced other association health plan models, such as the Vermont Automobile Dealers Association, as evidence of potential success.

Brittney Avila provided additional details, explaining that a Health Plan Committee, similar to an executive committee, would initially serve as a steering group under the existing board, with the option to form a separate organization if interest grows. She outlined procedural steps, including name reservation, obtaining a federal EIN, and filing articles of incorporation, and emphasized that starting with a fully-insured plan would minimize risk while providing claims experience before any consideration of self-funding. Avila confirmed there were no implications for federal tax-exempt status and VLCT's status as an instrumentality, and the board discussed potentially taking the opportunity to incorporate and amend bylaws to strengthen our position as an instrumentality.

Charlie Hancock moved to authorize the Executive Director to apply to DFR to offer a fully-insured interlocal health insurance plan in partnership with one of Vermont's health insurance providers. Mike Hogan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Mary Ann Goulette commended Ted and Avila for their innovative approach. Avila provided her contact information for follow-up questions to ensure ongoing communication as the process progresses.

## **Agenda Item #6: Legislative Update**

No action was taken on this item.

## **Agenda Item #7: Executive Session to Discuss VLCT / VLCT PACIF / VERB Administrative Agreements and Addendum**

Mayor Doenges moved to go into executive session to discuss PACIF and VERB administrative agreements. An evaluation and discussion of the Board's goals and strategies regarding the anticipated modifications of our administrative contracts with PACIF and VERB is needed. The public disclosure of the discussion of these goals and strategies would clearly place VLCT at a substantial disadvantage. In accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A), I move we go into executive session for the purpose of discussing the PACIF and VERB administrative contracts. Charlie Hancock seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and at 1:04 p.m. the board entered executive session. The recording was paused at this time.

Mayor Doenges moved to come out of executive session. Julie Hance seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The executive session ended at 2:41 p.m.

Thereupon, Charlie Hancock moved to authorize Mary Ann Goulette, in her capacity as President, to respond to the January 14th letter from Aaron Frank, President of PACIF, outlining the Board's preferred next steps, and authorize Mary Ann to appoint people to a working group as appropriate. The motion was seconded by Mayor Doenges. The motion was approved unanimously with Karen Godnick Barber abstaining.

## **Agenda Item #8: Authorize Signature of PACIF and VERB Annual Addendums**

No action taken.

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## **Agenda Item #9: Board Resolutions**

Mayor Doenges moved to adopt a resolution Recognizing Jeff Mobus' 20 Years of Service to the Town of Springfield and a resolution Recognizing Shane O'Keefe's 20 Years of Service to Vermont Municipalities. The motion was seconded by Ann Lawless. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **Agenda Item #10: Other Business**

Ted announced that Tom Leitz will be leaving municipal service and as such will be departing the VLCT Board. Ted and the Board thanked Tom for his service. Ted also announced VLCT's newest Board member Holly Groschner will be submitting her resignation in the coming days, creating 2 new Board vacancies. The nominating committee will convene and plans to present its recommended appointments at the next Board meeting.

The Board scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at noon.

## **Agenda Item #11: Adjourn**

Charlie Hancock moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mayor Doenges. The motion was approved unanimously and meeting adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Jeremy Weiss,  
Membership and Administrative Coordinator*

## **View Meeting here:**

[https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/pODGCGgTv3p7PUHZnbjtLve\\_-7z88cX-Hso-d1tRuFhMZRDi2ygWheKnjc5dCeH-IYVVOzavqzgMc4DG.btCdJwdchIkbOdfU](https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/pODGCGgTv3p7PUHZnbjtLve_-7z88cX-Hso-d1tRuFhMZRDi2ygWheKnjc5dCeH-IYVVOzavqzgMc4DG.btCdJwdchIkbOdfU)